

National Council of Jewish Women  
Greater Philadelphia Section

# Bulletin

A FAITH IN THE FUTURE

A BELIEF IN ACTION<sup>®</sup>

December, 2020



## A COMPELLING INTERVIEW RAISES QUESTIONS



Sarah Hurwitz and Char Kurland

### SHOULD JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS BE INVOLVED WITH POLITICS?

#### SHOULD RABBIS BE INVOLVED WITH POLITICAL ISSUES AND INCLUDE THEM IN THEIR SERMONS?

These questions bear relevance throughout history. Their urgency is felt by many now who have endured four years of a presidential administration that has been at odds with many of our Jewish values and served to undermine the mission of our own National Council of Jewish Women.

Viewpoints on these questions are reflected in a recent press release by our NCJW CEO, Sheila Katz, and in the November 12 zoom presentation, in the form of a "Armchair Chat" with Sarah Hurwitz, who was head speechwriter for Michelle Obama and authored the book, *HERE ALL ALONG-Finding Meaning Spirituality, and a Deeper Connection to Life-in Judaism*.

In her press release, Sheila Katz recounted "Over the last four years our network of (NCJW) advocates have been fighting against a series of problematic executive orders that impact vulnerable Americans including low income families, women, and people of color". Her stance affirms that nonpartisanship, which is a policy of NCJW, does not impede nor absolve us from our obligation to our Jewish values and activism.



Sheila Katz

In response to the above questions raised in the "armchair chat", Sarah Hurwitz, a graduate of Harvard University and its law school, who did extensive research for her book, described the Torah as the most political document she has ever read. Sarah referred to the story the Torah imparts of the Israelites, "helpless, enslaved people who God freed from Egypt and assembled at Mt. Sinai where he gave them the mission to create a society that was the opposite of Egypt. This society was to be focused on the vulnerable: the poor, the widowed, the orphaned, the stranger." Hence, our NCJW mission to advocate for policies which address poverty, income inequality, and immigration.

Sheila Katz's full press release is below in this December Bulletin.

You can view the video of Sarah Hurwitz's discussion with our Program Vice-presidents, Char Kurland by clicking [here](#). Kudos to Char for this outstanding program which was viewed by over 80 of our members!

PRESS RELEASE FROM SHEILA KATZ, NCJW CEO

NOVEMBER 6, 2020

### **National Council of Jewish Women Welcomes Final Election Results**

Jewish women celebrate first female vice president-elect, look forward to partnership with next administration to advance NCJW's mission.

WASHINGTON – With the outcome of the 2020 presidential election now decisively showing Joe Biden will become the next president of the United States and Kamala Harris will become the first female vice president, National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) CEO Sheila Katz released the following statement:

"We look forward to working with President-elect Joe Biden and, in particular, we are proud to celebrate the glass ceiling-breaking milestone of Vice President-elect Kamala Harris becoming the first woman, first Black person and first South Asian American elected to serve in this capacity.

"This election was an example of our democracy at work. Because of the efforts of so many, including National Council of Jewish Women advocates, we were able to protect the vote and ensure that every voice counted. NCJW's 29 state policy advocates; more than 30 Promote the Vote, Protect the Vote captains; and all 59 of our sections engaged in this election: through education, registering voters, getting out the vote, and volunteering as poll workers.

"The lives of women, families, and children will be greatly improved because of our work across the country, including in Colorado where NCJW advocates led the effort to oppose Prop 115, the ballot measure that would have banned 22 week abortions. NCJW California sections also successfully worked to pass Prop 17, restoring the right to vote for returning citizens.

"Over the last four years our network of advocates have been fighting against a series of problematic executive orders that impact vulnerable Americans including low income families, women, and people of color. To better protect these populations, we call on President-elect Biden to immediately restore Title X, to reinstate the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, rescind the Muslim Ban and Global Gag Rule, and reinstate protections including the birth control benefit in the Affordable Care Act.

"The next administration and Congress must protect the right of all people to safe, accessible, and affordable health care including codifying into the law legal abortion throughout our nation and eliminating the Hyde Amendment once and for all. We will continue to work with Congress to ensure the appointment of fair, independent, and qualified judges. We will urge the new Congress to take up and pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

"We remain dedicated to protecting and improving the lives of women, children and families and we will continue our tireless work to bring about change that increases equity and justice so everyone has the same rights and access."

**Sheila Katz, CEO of the National Council of Jewish Women:** "NCJW always seeks to advocate for the issues we believe in with respect and civility, and we believe the Biden/Harris administration will only help restore productive discourse in our nation."

*Originally published in Jewish Insider  
November 10, 2020*



#### **UPDATE FROM THE GRANTS COMMITTEE**

Dear Members, our Section's Grants Committee awards small grants, not to exceed \$500, to organizations that assist through their programs and initiatives the needs of women, children and families. We are pleased to announce that during this fiscal year we have provided grants to the Mitzvah Circle Foundation and the Pegasus Therapeutic Riding Academy.

Please take a moment and think of organizations that you support or are familiar with and ask them to submit a grant request. They must qualify as a IRC 501(c) (3) organization. A link to a copy of our Grants Application can be found on our NCJW webpage. Feel free to contact Wendy Rader, Grants Committee Chairperson, at [wrbargirl50@gmail.com](mailto:wrbargirl50@gmail.com) or 215 657-9347 with any questions.

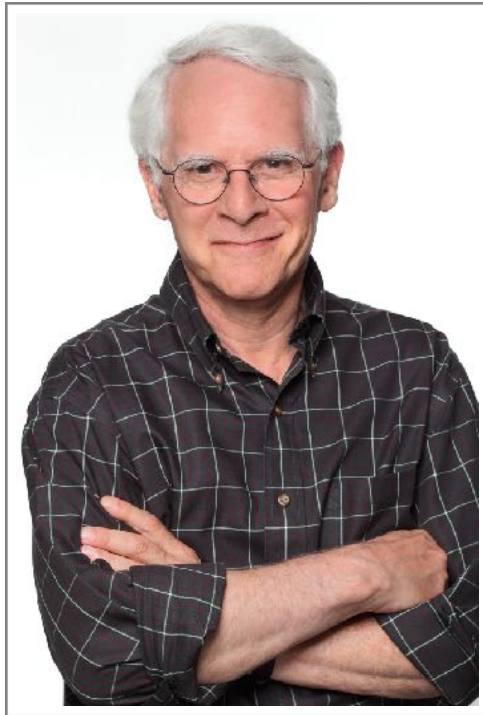
National Council of Jewish Women  
Greater Philadelphia Section

ZOOM EVENT  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2020 at 2:00PM

PLEASE JOIN US FOR

## **THE SPIRITUALITY OF LAUGHTER**

Featuring Rabbi & Comedian



### **Bob Alper**

Explore humor and modern Jewish tradition, and why laughter has been such an integral part of Jewish culture. Plus, plenty of belly laughs throughout.

#### **An engaging and inspiring event!**

Rabbi Bob Alper is the world's only practicing clergyman doing stand-up comedy... intentionally. He has served congregants for fourteen years and holds a doctorate from Princeton Theological Seminary.

*Thank You To Charlene Kurland & Ellen Toplin For Sponsoring This Program In Honor Of Their Granddaughter, Jemmi Laine's Bat Mitzvah*

RSVP REQUIRED BY DECEMBER 14, 2020

TO JOIN US

**[CLICK HERE](#)**

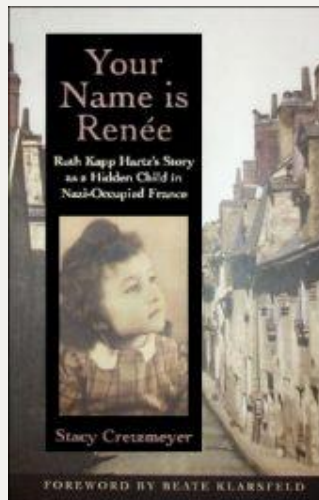
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Questions? Call Char Kurland (215) 805-3006, Patti First (215)-470-1560  
or Donna Bader (856) 303-9616

**National Council of Jewish Women  
Greater Philadelphia Section  
TUESDAY, January 19, 2021– 2:00 PM –ZOOM EVENT**

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR  
a discussion with Ruth Hartz, her story, shared in the book  
**Your Name Is Renée: Ruth Kapp Hartz's Story  
as a Hidden Child in Nazi-Occupied France****



Ruth Kapp Hartz will share stories of her life during and after World War II. Her exceptional life started as a young child growing up under constant threat of arrest in Nazi-occupied France. But through the good graces and protection of exceptional people she and her parents survived. Ruth eventually found her way to freedom after the Allied invasion and now commits her life to bear witness and speak out against persecution, antisemitism, and injustices of all kinds.

**RSVP REQUIRED BY MONDAY, JANUARY 18, 2021**

**[CLICK HERE - TO RSVP](#)**

Or if the link does not work for you, copy and paste this into your browser to rsvp

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScPah71L4coPtH\\_GmIUx942xmh\\_uS1hodikXHO73ADlx8INKQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScPah71L4coPtH_GmIUx942xmh_uS1hodikXHO73ADlx8INKQ/viewform)

**Questions? Call Char Kurland (215) 805-3006, Patti First (215)-470-1560, Donna Bader (856) 303-9616**

A graphic of a spotlight with a yellow beam of light shining down from the top left corner of the page.

## A Spotlight On Our NCJW Section

### Community Service

NCJW's outreach into the community is both widespread and focused on our goals and mission to "improve the quality of life for women, children and families." Community Service collaborates with local groups that have a shared interest in addressing issues impacting the well-being of these groups.

Some of the hands on volunteer opportunities available for NCJW's community projects include:

Ronald McDonald House – We serve as 'guest chefs' who prepare breakfast for the RMH families staying at the Ronald McDonald House adjacent to St. Christophers Hospital, Philadelphia, PA

Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Center –Volunteers and Holocaust survivors keep survivors stories alive for future generations – Let us never forget!

Dawn's Place – NCJW provides supplies for residents of Dawn's Place, who are survivors of commercial sexual exploitation or sex trafficking.

Grants Committee – awards small grants to organizations to support their programs and initiatives to address the needs of women, children and families. They must qualify as a 501 C(3) organization.

In addition, Community Service volunteers support Mitzvah Circle, Benjamin Franklin Elementary School, Cultural Kids Programs, and Goodies for the Good Guys as well as providing emergency relief during times of severe need.

#### **HI, NEIGHBOR!**

Our NCJW Greater Philadelphia Section is a participant in the Hi, Neighbor project, an initiative of the National Council of Jewish Women. This project offers opportunities for advocates to reach out to their Section community members who are in vulnerable situations.

In this past election season, advocates' outreach had been expanded to ensure that voters knew their options for safely casting their ballots. Safety concerns, regarding the pandemic, dictated that advocates did their outreach from their homes.

If you have questions about this project, are in need of such assistance or would like to provide assistance with this effort, you may contact Liz Downing at 215-534-3829.

### **127 YEARS OF POWERFUL JEWISH WOMEN**

NCJW confronts today's most urgent social and economic challenges facing women, children and families. Powered by the Jewish imperative to ensure dignity for all, we impact policy, advocate for justice, and support the community. Your voice has never been more essential and our voices together make a meaningful difference in the world.

Become A Member

Call us at  
215-302-3586

Visit us at  
[ncjwphiladelphia.org](http://ncjwphiladelphia.org)



## Thank-You's



November 3, 2020  
16 Cheshvan 5781

National Council of Jewish Women  
Greater Philadelphia Section  
Attn: Aileen Salus, Co-Vice President, Community Services  
104 Villa Drive  
Warminster, PA 18974

Dear Ms. Salus:

Thank you so much for your generous grant of \$1,200.00 from the National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Philadelphia Section, to the Female Hebrew Benevolent Society. As you indicated, this money will be used for disadvantaged women in the Jewish community. In the months ahead, I will send you a report on how your donation was able to assist our clients.

Your generosity ensures that we will move from strength to strength as we continue our work on behalf of local, Jewish women in need. I am so appreciative of the NCJW's continued support of our organization and all that we do.

Hope you are safe and well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Suzanne Sztul'.

Suzanne Sztul  
President

*In compliance with Internal Revenue requirements, this letter certifies that the Female Hebrew Benevolent Society did not provide any goods or services of substantial value in consideration of your donation.*

### Female Hebrew Benevolent Society

P.O. Box 36806 Philadelphia, PA 19107 • 215-821-9845 • FHBS.org

#### Board of Managers

Wendi Barish	Tamara Chasan Pomeranz
Wilma Bass	Judy Richards
Phyllis Cohen	Susan Sandler
Tamar Fox	Carol B. Shore
Judith Ginsberg	Pam Stein
Alicia Ludwig	Suzanne Sztul
	Meryl Tucker

Dear Aileen,  
I wanted to send an old-fashioned, hand-written note to thank you and NCJW for your recent generous gift in support of JFCS' Domestic Violence Program. We are so grateful for your organization's ongoing support of this critical program, especially during these trying times when relationship abuse is exacerbated by the isolation of COVID. Please thank your fellow council members on behalf of JFCS and those we serve, for your kindness and commitment to our work. Wishing you and everyone at NCJW good health and better times ahead. Sincerely, Pia Eisenberg / JFCS

Our Section received this note from JFCS thanking us for our annual contribution of \$2400.

**A Note from our Past-President, Barbara Nussbuam**



The national president of NCJW has asked me to Co-Chair the National Section Advisory Committee (SAC). I am really honored and this committee will work closely with Sections around the country and with NCJW Inc. (National). The SAC is comprised of current and past Section leaders from around the country to ensure strategic alignment between the Sections and National. SAC provides Section leaders with a voice at the national level and enables them to serve as advisors to NCJW, Inc. Board of Directors on issues that impact Sections. SAC will provide the National staff and Board on leadership development programs and projects for Sections and changes to the new business model.



From Cindi Pasceri:  
Here are my "girls" celebrating  
Kim's and my birthdays💕💕

Condolences:  
To the family of longtime member,  
Maxine Stutman.

A dark blue fabric facemask with white text. The top part says "NCJW" and the bottom part says "National Council Of Jewish Women".

**Order Your NCJW Facemask Now**

Face masks are available now. The mask is double layers, and is washable.  
The cost is only \$11.  
Support NCJW  
We can either meet or I can mail them to you plus postage.  
We have a limited supply.  
Ann Pollock 215-806-4068 or  
apollock1229@yahoo.com



The masked ladies met at Ben and Irv's on Tuesday, November 17 for a collection for Mitzvah Circle. Behind those masks are Linda Brosgol, Sherry Kohn, Ellen Mirbach and Judy Fried.  
Our Section will be collecting for Mitzvah Circle on the third Tuesday of each month. For information, please call Sherry Kohn at 215-208-0550.



## An Update on our Greater Philadelphia Section Website

Our Section Website is quickly updated with information and pictures from our Section members and a news feed from our National Office.



**WHAT'S ON OUR PHILADELPHIA SECTION WEBSITE?**

<https://ncjwphiladelphia.org/>



The first item you will find on our web page is a link to the latest news from National NCJW.



Zoom Recordings  
of Past Programs

**Watch it again or see it for the first time.**

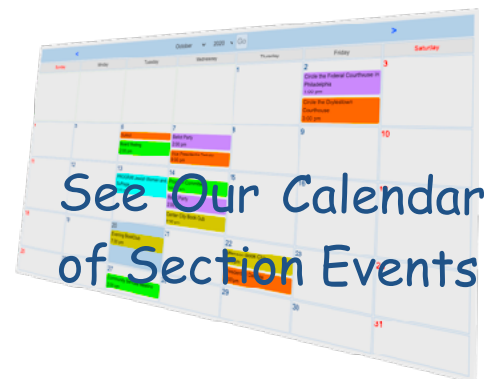
Development of Drugs and Vaccines with Dr. Ira Spector.

Jewish Women and Suffrage with Dr. Melissa Klapper.

An Armchair Conversation with Sarah Hurwitz.



See the latest activities  
in pictures.



**All This and More at**

<https://ncjwphiladelphia.org/>





**Check out our NCJW Greater Philadelphia**

**Facebook Section Page**

**<https://www.facebook.com/ncjw.philadelphia>**

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Click here: <http://eepurl.com/hb6rNb>

And check out our ACT Page on our web site at: <https://ncjwphiladelphia.org/act/>

This provided by our Advocacy Committee, under the leadership of VP & Presidium Liz Downing (215-534-3829) and supported by PA State Advocacy Rep, Lynne Jacobs (215-868-7742). Feel free to call one of us with any questions.

NCJW is committed to creating a world where all people, regardless of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, or immigration status, have the right to build their families and live their lives with dignity. Our Jewish values teach us that our reproductive freedoms are integrally bound to our religious liberty; we are committed to advancing the goals of reproductive justice so that every person can make their own moral and faith-informed decisions about their body, health, and family.

Since its founding, NCJW has been a leader in the reproductive health and rights movement, and while much advancement has been made in the past 100 years to legally secure a person's right to abortion and contraception, there is so much more that needs to be done to truly ensure reproductive freedom for all.

Reproductive health, rights, and justice goes beyond the basics of reproduction. It requires us to dig deeper, advocate louder, and love harder. It requires us to center the voices of those who have been marginalized at the center to lead the conversation for social change.

Until every person has the power to make their own informed decisions about their body, sexuality, and future, our work is not over.

## Book Clubs

### Afternoon Book Club

During the pandemic, our group has continued to meet via Zoom. Thank you to Celia Nires-Rothkopf for moderating our November book discussion of [There,There](#) by Tommy Orange.

Below is the information for our next Zoom meeting:

Thursday, Dec 17 at 1:30pm.  
*The Secret Keeper* by Kate Morton  
Moderator: Anita Shomer

For more information, contact Susan Brooks  
at 215-542-0712 or [seamcrazy@verizon.net](mailto:seamcrazy@verizon.net)



### Center City Book Club

December 9th *The Giver of Stars*  
by Jojo Moyes  
Leader is Faith Edelman

Thank you to Helene Sternberg who did a masterful job leading our discussion of *The Silent Patient* by Alex Michaelides

Center City residents interested in a book group  
Contact Audrey Block  
[ablock1919@comcast.net](mailto:ablock1919@comcast.net)  
215-688-0094

### Evening Book Club

December 15 at 7:30 PM  
*Commonwealth* by Ann Patchett  
Lee Tonik, facilitator

Thank you to Rebecca Landau for leading an excellent discussion.

For more information contact Joan Sax...  
215-947-9166 or [joansax@comcast.net](mailto:joansax@comcast.net)

## Welcome to New Members

Mandi Bucceroni

As membership vice-presidents, we welcome our new members to call us regarding any questions you may have.

Please contact: Ellen Mirbach [semirbach@gmail.com](mailto:semirbach@gmail.com) 215-771-5311  
Donna Spector [queenaheartds@hotmail.com](mailto:queenaheartds@hotmail.com) 215-886-0640

We will be delighted to send out membership packets.  
Membership Dues: Annual \$45 (Be an Angel \$55 🙇)\*

Please LIKE us on our Facebook page  
at <https://www.facebook.com/ncjw.philadelphia>

\*For an additional \$10, you can achieve "angel" 🙇 status which increases the number of people we can assist.

### \$50 GIANT CASH CARDS

GIANT cards are available for purchase.  
Please contact Roz Fudell. 267-939-4424

If you have changed your address, phone number and/or email or if you hear of a member's passing, please contact:  
Harriet Winokur [harrietwinokur@gmail.com](mailto:harrietwinokur@gmail.com)

REMEMBER.... THERE WILL BE MANY WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE.



### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Join our wonderful NCJW group of volunteer tutors at our adopted Benjamin Franklin Elementary School now in our sixth year. Until safety issues relevant to the pandemic are resolved we will pursue other means to support students as we await a safe return to school.

Please call Harriet Gran at 215-206-1026 or email [hgranncjw@gmail.com](mailto:hgranncjw@gmail.com).

**Sponsoring an event** for a minimum of \$100.00 in honor of a special event or person in your life, or in memory of an important person is a great way to do a double mitzvah! You are honoring the person or event and helping NCJW. You can share this sponsorship between friends. Your name ( or names) will be on the invitation flyer. This is a lovely and meaningful way to support our NCJW section!

Please consider sponsoring an upcoming event.

Just call Ann Pollack 215-806-4068

and tell us what event you'd like to sponsor.

### Tribute cards for special occasions and memorials

Our new section card is selling 6 for \$25 or \$5 each. Purchase the cards at a meeting or contact Fran Radel and she will send a card for you.

Contact Fran at 610-584-9234 (home) 610-304-3908 (cell) or Email: [fran@markradel.com](mailto:fran@markradel.com)

### INCLUDE NCJW Greater Philadelphia Section in your estate planning,

You can help its important work continue for years to come.

### Celebrating a simcha or have one you would like NCJW to recognize?

We will make a note of it. An acknowledgement to you and the recipient is our pleasure.

What a great way to share by making a donation to our Greater Philadelphia Section.

For information, call 215-302-3586 and leave a message for Pearl Tragash, Treasurer.



We look forward to the time when we resume all of our volunteer activities.

Due to the pandemic, HAMEC (Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Center) will not be going into the Philadelphia and Delaware Valley area schools until they reopen to allow students to reenter the classrooms.

HAMEC may need volunteers to help with survivors and liberators who are making their presentations to students on Zoom. if you have any interest in participating in this important project, please call me.

The good news is that HAMEC has moved into a larger space at Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel in Elkins Park.

Judy Fried

(215) 245-1309

[judyfried38@gmail.com](mailto:judyfried38@gmail.com)





## OFFICERS 2020-2021

This year, NCJW of Greater Philadelphia is being led by a Presidium. A Presidium is a council of executive officers that collectively administer the organization's business in place of one individual President.

Our presidium will be comprised of Vice Presidents, with the only or most senior member of their portfolio. Members of this year's Presidium are:

- Vice President of Advocacy, Liz Downing
- Co-Vice President of Membership, Ellen Mirbach
- Co-Vice President of Program/Education, Char Kurland
- Co-Vice President of Community Services, Linda Brosgol
- Vice President of Fund Raising, Ann Pollock

It has been collectively decided that each of the presidium members will be taking on, in addition to the responsibilities in their own portfolio, the following:

- Executing one of the duties of a single president
- presiding over an executive and full board meeting
- writing a presidium post for the Bulletin

We hope that you will not hesitate to contact any of the presidium members with your questions.

<b>Fundraising VP</b>	Ann Pollock*	<a href="mailto:apollock1229@yahoo.com">apollock1229@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Membership Vice Presidents</b>	Donna Spector Ellen Mirbach*	<a href="mailto:queenaheartsds@hotmail.com">queenaheartsds@hotmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:semirbach@gmail.com">semirbach@gmail.com</a>
<b>Program/Education Vice Presidents</b>	Donna Bader Patti First Charlene Kurland*	<a href="mailto:DRBader@comcast.net">DRBader@comcast.net</a> <a href="mailto:patal16@verizon.net">patal16@verizon.net</a> <a href="mailto:chaky@aol.com">chaky@aol.com</a>
<b>Community Services Vice Presidents</b>	Aileen Salus Linda Brosgol*	<a href="mailto:asalus1945@gmail.com">asalus1945@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:lgbrosgol@gmail.com">lgbrosgol@gmail.com</a>
<b>Advocacy Vice President</b>	Liz Downing*	<a href="mailto:elizabeth.downing@msn.com">elizabeth.downing@msn.com</a>
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# National Council of Jewish Women

Harriet Winokur  
 732 Johns Lane  
 Ambler, PA  
 19002-2616

## December 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Advocacy Meeting	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 Board meeting	9	10	11-12 Hannukah	
13	14	15-16 Zoom Program The Spirituality of Laughter w/ Rabbi and comedian Bob Alper		17	18	19
20	21			24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

National Council of Jewish Women is a grassroots organization of volunteers and advocates who turn progressive ideals into action. Inspired by Jewish values, NCJW strives for social justice by improving the quality of life for women, children and families and by safeguarding individual rights. We are a 501 (c)3 nonprofit organization. Our National web site is [www.NCJW.org](http://www.NCJW.org)